


BROTHERS OF CHARITY SERVICES IRELAND

NATIONAL POLICY - VISITORS

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Ethos

'We are committed to working with people with an intellectual disability to claim their rightful place as valued citizens. Inclusion is a fundamental principle that underlies all aspects of our work. We believe in the intrinsic value of every person and we aim to further the dignity of all associated with our services.'

'We continue the Brothers of Charity Services' tradition of being open to the best contemporary influences. We want to be inspired by the most creative ideas ...and to ask how we give them concrete expression.'

The Brothers of Charity Services Ethos (2001), Going Forward Together.

1.0 Introduction

The Brothers of Charity Services Ireland endeavour to offer services/supports in local communities. This enables each person who is supported by our Services to positively engage in the social and economic life of their local towns and villages, and in doing so, develop a range of relationships that enhance their quality of life.

Our responses are based on the recognition of each person (who is supported by our Services) as an individual, an equal citizen with equal rights and an absolute respect of that status. We, therefore, support each person to live their lives based on their own personal visions and choices, to identify and select their personal goals in life and to develop their personal plan to achieve those goals.

2.0 Policy Statement

- 2.1 The Brothers of Charity Services Ireland extends a warm welcome to all visitors and shall facilitate each individual supported by our Services to receive visitors in accordance with their wishes unless there are exceptional circumstances when access may need to be restricted (see 8.11 below).

3.0 Purpose

- 3.1 This policy has been developed in order to ensure that employees of the Services make visitors to Designated Centres feel welcome and safe.
- 3.2 This policy summarises the arrangements in place to ensure individuals can receive visitors of their choice to their home.

4.0 Scope of the Policy

- 4.1 The policy applies to all visitors to Designated Centres including family members and friends of the individuals supported by the Services, managers and employees from other areas of the organisation.

5.0 Legislation/Other Related Policies

- 5.1 The Health Act 2007 (Care and Support of Residents in Designated Centres for Persons (Children and Adults with Disabilities) regulations 2013 requires that the Services have in place a Policy in relation to visitors and Section 11 sets out the regulations in this regard.
- 5.2 In order to fulfil its obligations as a Service Provider the Brothers of Charity Services Ireland is required to create and process records which hold both personal and sensitive data. These records are kept 'in confidence' and processed in strict accordance with the privacy and data protection rights of the individual. The BOCSI shares records only for the purpose of compliance with service delivery, health, and regulatory requirements. Data will be disclosed where required or authorised by law and in line with the General Data Protection Regulations.
- 5.3 The Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) Act 2015
- 5.4 National Policy & Procedure for the Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults at Risk of Abuse
- 5.5 National Policy & Procedure on the Welfare & Protection of Children

6.0 Glossary of Terms and definitions

The Services refers to the Brothers of Charity Services Ireland
Staff includes all persons paid or unpaid who support individuals in our Services
PIC refers to Person in Charge

7.0 Roles and Responsibilities

- 7.1 All staff, students and volunteers must adhere to this policy
- 7.2 All Services Managers, Heads of Department and Team Leaders are responsible for ensuring that all staff and relevant others are informed of this policy and adhere to its requirements.

8.0 Procedure

- 8.1 The wishes of the individuals supported by the Services must be paramount in all decisions regarding visitors.

- 8.2 Family members and friends of the individuals supported by the Services are encouraged to visit regularly and to maintain contact by whatever means available when visiting is not possible¹
- 8.3 Visitors are asked to take into consideration, when planning their visit, when this is most suitable for their relation/friend. Consideration may need to be given to the preference or requirement of the individual and co-residents to have prior notice of visitors to their shared home.
- 8.4 Individuals supported by the Services are welcome to see their visitors in any appropriate and available area of the house. Everything possible will be done to ensure the utmost privacy for the visit. Visitors may conduct their visit in the bedroom of their relation/friend with the consent of that person. If there is a reason why this is not appropriate it should be noted in the individual's personal profile.
- 8.5 Visitors are welcome to visit at any time including early morning or during the night at times of serious illness and for end of life planning. In such situations the visitor/s should agree arrangements with the staff to suit the needs of the individual.
- 8.6 In the interest of health and safety, a record is kept of all visitors to the house however where houses are not staffed local arrangements will be put in place.
- 8.7 Visitors are welcome to make any suggestions which may improve the quality of service being offered. They are welcome to be involved in and to participate in any social occasion involving the person they are visiting.
- 8.8 Visitors are encouraged to raise any concerns or questions in relation to an issue arising during the visit with the staff and are entitled to have them responded to appropriately. All concerns raised will be noted and brought to the attention of the PIC/ Line Manager who will ensure they are resolved or followed up appropriately. Staff must be mindful that they **must** maintain the confidentiality of the people we support. Where a visitor indicates they wish to make a Complaint they should be made aware, by staff, of the Complaints Procedure.
- 8.9 The individuals² we support have the right to refuse to see any visitor. This right will be respected and upheld by the staff on duty. Any such request or refusal by the individual will be recorded, with the reasons in their personal file. If appropriate it may be discussed at a follow up multi-disciplinary team meeting. All staff will be made aware of the views of the individual, and ensure that any visitor/s involved will be tactfully referred to the person in charge on arrival.
- 8.10 Visitors are expected to be respectful to the individual they are visiting, other residents in the house and staff during their visit. Failure to adhere to this may result in the visitor being asked to leave and an alternative location for the visit arranged.

¹ Unless in the case of a child the family/guardian or social worker has so requested or a Court Order has required the restriction of visits

² This does not apply in the case of children under 16 years of age.

- 8.11 While we strive to facilitate all visits there may be circumstances where restrictions may be put in place e.g.
- for infection control purposes on the advice of Public Health,
 - where the PIC/Line Manager consider that facilitating the visit may not be beneficial for the individual and/or other residents
 - where there is a court order in place or, in the case of a child, where the family/guardian or social worker has so requested.
- 8.12 In circumstances where staff are required to refuse a visitor entry to the house the individual who the visitor was coming to see and the visitor will be informed of the reason for this decision and if possible alternative arrangements or location for the visit will be made. Staff will record this in the personal file of the individual and will also inform the Services Manager, in writing, stating the reasons for the refusal.

9.0 Review

- 9.1 This policy will be reviewed every three years or more frequently if required.